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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Letter dated 31 December 2009 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I write to you today to draw your attention, once again, to the grave consequences of the continued illegal actions of Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Israel continues to recklessly and flagrantly pursue its illegal colonization campaign, particularly in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, destroying the contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Territory and destroying the prospects for a peaceful settlement.

This week, the Israeli Government authorized the construction of yet another 700 new settlement housing units in the illegal Israeli settlement built on Jabal Abu Ghneim, also known as "Har Homa". This action is clear evidence of Israel's insistence on defying the collective will of the international community by forcing such unlawful faits accomplis on the Palestinian people through its military might. The Jabal Abu Ghneim settlement is expanding at an unprecedented rate and, in the process, is devouring thousands of acres of Palestinian-owned land in Bethlehem and Occupied East Jerusalem. Israel, the occupying Power, considers this to be part of the so-called Greater Jerusalem and claims that it is not included under its self-proclaimed so-called moratorium on settlement construction in the Occupied West Bank.

Moreover, on 29 December 2009, Israel's Defense Ministry approved plans to legalize the construction of 15 permanent structures being built in the illegal Israeli settlement of "Kiryat Netafim" in the Occupied West Bank on private lands owned by Palestinians. This approval has come after the Israeli Supreme Court issued a restraining order against the construction of the structures in response to a petition filed by the Peace Now Movement in this connection. The Israeli Government has also announced a plan to advance the process of planning and construction in this illegal settlement.

These illegal Israeli actions and measures are being perpetrated in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and other relevant provisions of international law and numerous relevant United Nations Security Council and

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General Assembly resolutions, and are also being perpetrated in flagrant defiance of and as a challenge to the will of the international community.

Given these dangerous developments, we reiterate once more our adamant rejection of these illegal actions and false classifications by the occupying Power. Moreover, the international community, including the United Nations, must recall the moral and legal responsibility towards the Palestinian people until a just resolution is achieved as regards their plight and the injustice inflicted upon them. This responsibility must prompt international actors to take measures and actions that extend far beyond timid language and statements of goodwill and that will actually compel the occupying Power to cease its illegal actions forthwith.

These illegal Israeli actions, which are devouring the prospects for an independent, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, must be firmly confronted and rejected by the international community with unwavering determination and with all of the diplomatic and political tools and means available to the international community. Not only are continued silence and an ineffective reaction to these actions insufficient, but they reflect an unacceptable degree of acquiescence and agreement and are in clear violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. It is high time that Israel, the occupying Power, is compelled to realize that its continued impunity is a clear threat to international peace and security and shall be met with swift consequences if it does not cease. The realization of peace is dependent upon this.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 352 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 28 December 2009 (A/ES-10/472-S/2009/675), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations